December 28, 2025

Service of Questions, Lessons and Carols 10:00am with Holy Communion The Reverend Ben Groth, Preaching and Presiding Matthew Harrison, Director of Music

Welcome!

We are so glad you have joined us for worship! If this is your first time here, please fill out the yellow welcome card in the pew and place it in the offering plate if you would like to be contacted by Pastor Ben, would like more information about the church, or would like to sign up for our weekly news email.

Restrooms: Our restrooms are located downstairs at the bottom of the stairways at the back of the sanctuary. There are signs about which side has the men's and women's restrooms. There are any-gender solo restrooms in the education wing, one of which has a changing table. Please knock and ensure no one else is inside!

Care and Prayer: If you would like to request prayer or speak with Pastor Ben about struggles, joys, or anything else, please feel free to email him at bgroth@1stlutherannb.org or call/text at 860-348-3966.

Children: We love having children in worship! At the front of the sanctuary there is a "pray ground" with lots of space to spread out and sit comfortably, some toys, and a great collection of books for different ages. All children and caretakers are welcome to use that space anytime during the service!

Volunteering: We have a lot of opportunities at First Lutheran to volunteer and serve our community. Our Monday Morning Mingle free meal takes place from 8-9am each Monday, while our free Pasta Dinners take place from 5-6pm each Wednesday. Both of these programs can always use volunteers. If you'd like to help out, or are interested in helping with worship or other things at First Lutheran, please contact Pastor Ben.

Coffee Hour: After the service, please join us downstairs for refreshments, and a chance to get to know one another better!

Gathering

PRELUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Please stand as able

- P Blessed be the holy Trinity, 4 one God, creator of darkness and light, word of truth, wind sweeping over the waters.
- C Amen.
- P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Trusting the goodness and lovingkindness of God our Savior, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

- P God of life,
- you promise good news of great joy for all people, and call us to be messengers of your peace. We confess that too often we hoard our joy, our resources, and our security. We nurture conflict and build barriers. We neglect the needs of our neighbors and ignore the groaning of creation. Have mercy on us. Where we are selfcentered, open our hearts. Where we are reluctant, give us courage. Where we are cynical, restore our trust. Renew us with your grace and give us again the hope of eternal life in you. Amen.
- P Hear the good news: We are children of God and heirs of God's promises through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In

 → Jesus we are forgiven and redeemed. Sing with joy, for all the ends of the earth shall know the salvation of God.
- C Amen.

THE GREETING

- P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- **And also with you.**

THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

- **P** Let us pray. Almighty God,
- Shine into our hearts the light of your wisdom, O God, and open our minds to the knowledge of your word, that in all things we may think and act according to your good will and may live continually in the light of your Son, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

 Amen.

Please be seated



QUESTION:

How do you want to grow in faith this year? Who will you pray for this year?

LESSON: Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷ How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." ⁸ Listen! Your sentinels lift up their voices; together they shout for joy, for in plain sight they see the return of the Lord to Zion. ⁹ Break forth; shout together for joy, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the Lord has comforted his people; he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰ The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

CAROL: #269 Once in Royal David's City





QUESTION:

What do you want to do this year that will matter most in 10 years? How do you feel burdened right now?

5

LESSON: Isaiah 35:1-10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus 2it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and shouting. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you." 5Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be opened; 6then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert; 7the burning sand shall become a pool and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp; the grass shall become reeds and rushes. 8A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. 9 No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰ And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

CAROL: #279 O Little Town of Bethlehem



QUESTION:

Who can you encourage this year? What do you need to heal this year?

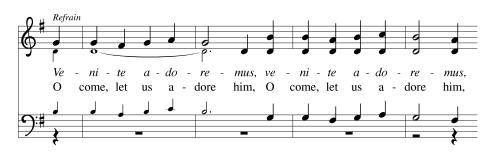
LESSON: Luke 2:1-7

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

CAROL #283

Oh Come All Ye Faithful







QUESTION:

How do you want to help others this year? Who do you want to listen to this year?

LESSON: Luke 2: 8-20

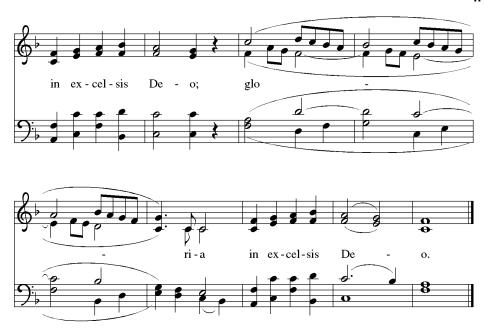
⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see — I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us."

¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.





QUESTION:

What's your most important goal this year? What habit do you want to start this year?

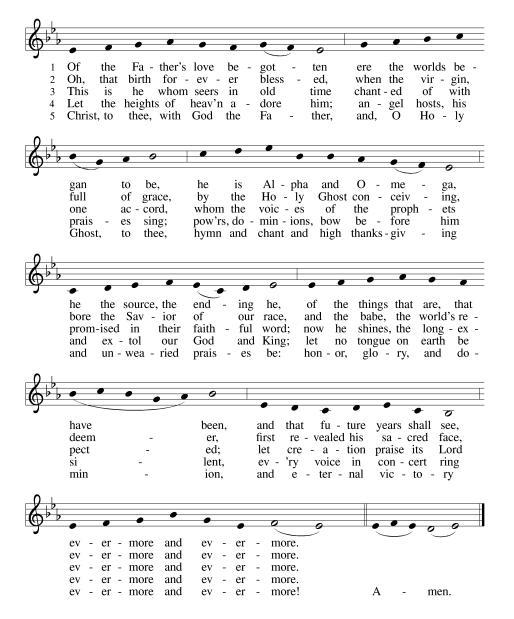
LESSON: John: 1-14

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

¹²But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

CAROL # 295

Of the Father's Love Begotten



Please stand as able

THE APOSTLES' CREED

P Let us confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

Q I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS

- A Empowered by the news of Christ's birth, let us pray boldly for the church, creation, and all who are in need.
- A brief silence.
- ⚠ God of grace, you show us mercy not according to our worthiness, but according to the abundance of your steadfast love. Grant us the courage to go into the world and do likewise. Hear us, O God.
- **Q** Your mercy is great.
- A God of righteousness, when leaders fail to fulfill their calls to enact justice, you suffer alongside us. Propel those in power to see you reflected in the faces of all they serve. Hear us, O God.
- **Q** Your mercy is great.
- A God of life, you claim us as your own and care for us as Christ's siblings. Pour out your compassion in every place your people suffer and protect them in the palm of your hand. We pray especially for Linda, Eileen, Tom, Scott, Gini, Bill, Lin, and Wes. Hear us, O God.
- **Q** Your mercy is great.

- As you sheltered your son Jesus from Herod's grasp, shelter all children in danger. As you comforted Rachel, comfort all who have lost children to violence. Hear us, O God.
- **Q** Your mercy is great.
- A God of love, you console those who weep for lost beloved ones. Even as we mourn, we offer thanks for those who have gone before us, trusting in your comfort and protection. Hear us, O God.
- **2** Your mercy is great.
- (A) With the joy of Christ's birth in our hearts, we commend our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your boundless mercy and eternal love, through Jesus Christ our Savior.
- C Amen.

THE PEACE

- P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C And also with you.
- P Let us greet one another in the name of the Lord.

You may share a sign of God's peace.

Peace be with you.

Peace be with you.

Please be seated

The Offering is Collected.

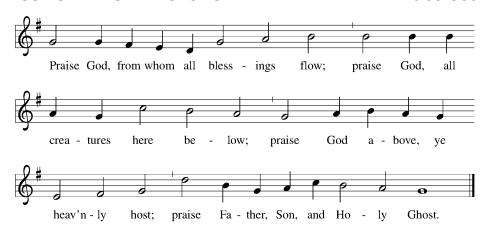
OFFERTORY MUSIC

The offering is brought to the altar during the offertory response.

Please stand as able

POST OFFERTORY RESPONSE

Praise God

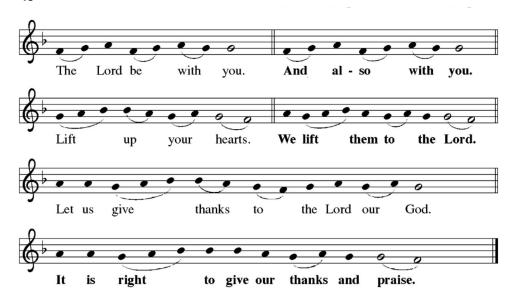


THE OFFERTORY PRAYER

- A God of abundance, receive and bless these gifts we have offered. Join our hearts with the song of the angels, and gather us at your table of celebration. Strengthen us to share with all the world the abundance of your grace upon grace, poured out in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.
- C Amen.

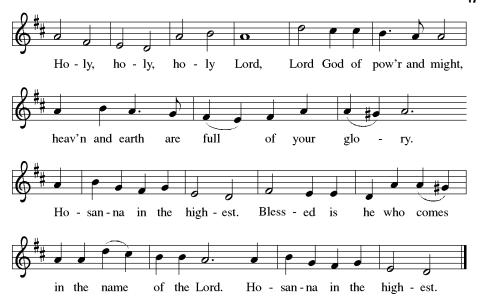
The Meal

THE INITIAL DIALOG



THE PREFACE

P It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ, who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



THE THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Here the pastor continues with the Thanksgiving at the Table.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.
- © Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

P A child has been born for us, a Son given to us. Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

Please be seated

SONG FOR COMMUNION 'Twas In The Moon of Wintertime



- 'Twas in the moon of win-ter-time when all the birds had fled,
- With in lodge of bro-ken bark the ten - der babe was found; a
- ear-liest moon of win-ter-time is 3 not so round and fair the
- chil-dren of the for-est free, the an - gel - song is true:



*God the Lord of all earth sent an gel choirs in - stead; the rag - ged robe of rab - bit skin en-wrapped his beau - ty round; the help - less in - fant there. was the ring of glo - ry on ho - ly child of earth and heav'n is to - day for you. born

be but The Come,

a

as



their light the stars grew dim, and wan-d'ring hunt-ers heard the hymn: fore as the hunt-er braves drew nigh, the an - gel song rang loud and high: chiefs from far be-fore him knelt with gifts of fox and bea-ver pelt. kneel be - fore the ra - diant boy, who brings you beau - ty, peace, and joy.



Je-sus your king is born! Je - sus is born, in ex - cel-sis glo-ri - a!

THE COMMUNION HYMN #276

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly



- 1 In fant ho ly, in fant low ly, for his bed a cat tle stall;
- 2 Flocks were sleep-ing, shep-herds keep-ing vig-il till the morn-ing new





Swift-ly wing-ing, an - gels sing-ing, bells are ring-ing, tid - ings bring-ing: Thus re-joic-ing, free from sor-row, prais-es voic-ing, greet the mor-row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

Sending

Please stand as able

THE POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen

THE POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

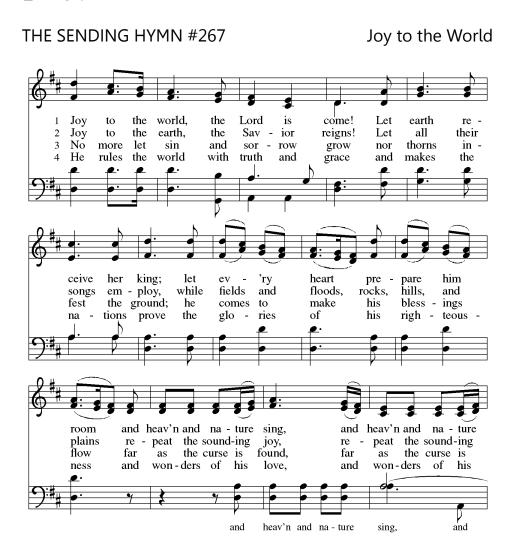
A God our redeemer, you have fed us at this table with gifts of grace, truth, and life. As you have gathered us in joy, send us forth as messengers of your peace. Make us shine with the good news of your glory, born to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

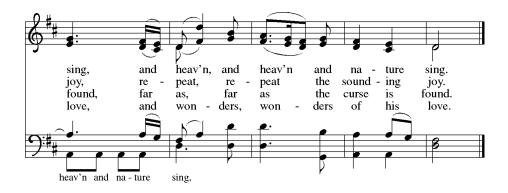
G Amen

THE BENEDICTION

P God bless you and keep you, + Jesus grant you grace and truth, and the Spirit send peace upon your hearts, now and forever.

Amen.





THE DISMISSAL

- A Christ the Savior is born! Go in peace. Proclaim this good news.
- **G** Thanks be to God.

THE POSTLUDE



Happy Holidays from your church staff:

Pastor - Ben Groth Director of Music - Matthew Harrison Office Manager - Nancy Peterson

CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS 2025

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Abucewicz Sr. Sandy K. Abucewicz Henry & Margaret Anderson Lois & Ralph Arena Donald G. Bates Josephine Borselle Gail Buchholz Rosenda Burns Joanne Carlson Margaret Carlson Mr. & Mrs. Walter S. Carlson Sophie Conti Nancy Gentry Helen Halladay Mr. Donald C. Harris Robert & Lillian Hems Mr. & Mrs. P. Philip Herrmann Donald Heslin Kathy Hickey C. Norman & Mabel Holmberg Mr. & Mrs. Charles O. Holmstrom Louise and Ralph Holmstrom Ruth Holmstrom

Olga "Toots" Janelle Linda Jedziniak Adolph & Signe Johnson Mr. & Mrs. Alvin A. Kallberg Mr. & Mrs. Arthur J. Kallberg Mr. James F. Kallberg William A. Kallberg Vera & Joseph Kozalka John Mangan Donald Merkle Jeffrey Merkle Anthony Michalski The Loved Ones of Nancy and Michael Michalski Mr. & Mrs. Allen R. Nelson Eleanor P. Nelson Joseph E. Pavano, Jr. Adolph J. & Ruth V. Peterson James Rinas Alan & Mildred Robertson Pastor Dagmar Rosenberg Mr. & Mrs. Jean-Emile Rouillard Soderquist Family & Friends

Mrs. Ida Swanson

Thanks to

Worship Assistant Robert Buchholz

Communion Assistant Laurie Kosich

Reader Frank Murphy, Craig Diangelo

Ushers Cheryl Brideaux, Frank Murphy

> Coffee Hour Goodies Cheryl Brideaux

> > and

Videographer Eric Nilsson

for volunteering to be a part of the service this morning

People Power for 1|4|2026

Worship Assistant - Nancy Peterson

Communion Assistant - Jane Holmstrom

Reader - Alan Robertson

Ushers - Cheryl Brideaux, Elaine Borselle

Coffee Hour Goodies - NA

calendar

December 29 - Monday - **OFFICE CLOSED** December 29 - Monday, 8am - Morning Mingle December 30 - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting **December 31** - Wednesday, 4:30pm - Worship Service **December 31** - Wednesday, 5-6pm - Pasta Dinner December 31 - Wednesday, 6pm - Choir December 31 - Wednesday, 6pm - AA Meeting January 4 - Sunday, 9:30am - Prayer Group **January 4** - Sunday, 10am - Worship with Holy Communion January 5 - Monday, 8am - Morning Mingle January 6 - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting January 6 - Tuesday, 7pm - Executive Meeting January 7 - Wednesday, 1pm - Mission/Outreach Meeting January 7 - Wednesday, 4:30pm - Worship Service January 7 - Wednesday, 5-6pm - Pasta Dinner January 7 - Wednesday, 6pm - Choir January 7 - Wednesday, 6pm - AA Meeting January 11 - Sunday, 9:30am - Prayer Group January 11 - Sunday, 10am - Worship with Holy Communion January 12 - Monday, 8am - Morning Mingle January 13 - Tuesday, 4pm - Worship & Arts Meeting January 13 - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting January 14 - Wednesday, 4:30pm - Worship Service **January 14** - Wednesday, 5-6pm - Pasta Dinner January 14 - Wednesday, 6pm - Choir January 14 - Wednesday, 6pm - AA Meeting **January 18** - Sunday, 9:30am - Prayer Group January 18 - Sunday, 10am - Worship with Holy Communion January 19 - Monday, 8am - Morning Mingle January 20 - Tuesday, 6pm - AA Meeting

January 20 - Tuesday, 7pm - Council Meeting

Monday Morning Mingle 7am - 9am Clothing Rack - Wednesday - 4pm Worship Service - Wednesday 4:30pm - 5pm Pasta Dinner - Wednesday 5pm - 6pm Community Choir -Wednesday - 6pm

> Please call Marianne Farr for more information (860)-637-6460

PR	ZAY	FR	LIST
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Please note: Prayer names will remain for two weeks unless renewed in the church office. Named in parentheses are those who submitted the names they follow.

Linda Carlson; Eileen Buys; Tom Abucewicz Scott Johnson (Carol McQueeney); Gini & Bill Sonstrom (Sue Sonstrom); Lin (Eileen Buys). Wes Morehead (Elijah Morehead).

OUR VISION

First for what is first: Christ, our Lord
First in nurturing youth and families in faith
First with inspiring worship, fellowship and service
First by reaching out to all

First Lutheran Church of the Reformation

A community of believers in Jesus Christ 77 Franklin Square, New Britain, Connecticut (860) 224-2475 + www.1stlutherannb.org





Evangelical Lutheran Church in AmericaGod's work. Our hands.